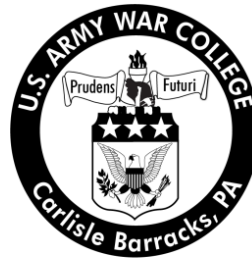


Strategy Research Project International Fellow

Cooperation and Integration: Keeping Austria's Forces Relevant for 21st Century

by

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United States Army War College
Class of 2013

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
<p>The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</p>					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) xx-03-2013		2. REPORT TYPE STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Cooperation and Integration: Keeping Austria's Forces Relevant for 21st Century				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Colonel Rudolf Zauner Austrian Army				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Dr. Robert C. Nation Department of National Security & Strategy				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College 122 Forbes Avenue Carlisle, PA 17013				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution A: Approved for Public Release. Distribution is Unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Word Count: 8120					
14. ABSTRACT Neutrality as a security concept is archaic for today's risks and hinders Austria in fully integrating into global security frameworks based upon shared responsibilities and mutual benefits. Staying outside a defense alliance or a future EU core defense group puts an overall security responsibility on Austria which it will not be able to bear in the future on the basis of available resources, tasks and capabilities. Austria confronts new risks, risks that cannot be managed by a small state in isolation. The challenge for Austria is to develop a strategy for the armed forces which reflects the 21st century security environment, and provides security and resilience on the basis of an inclusive, multinational and comprehensive approach. Austria has to face the reality that given its relatively small comparative power, it must rely on strong cooperation and inclusion in defense structures. This may include the sacrifice of certain aspects of a traditional understanding of national sovereignty and defense to secure its survival and vital interests.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Neutrality, EU, NATO, Comprehensive Approach, National Sovereignty					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 40	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UU	b. ABSTRACT UU	c. THIS PAGE UU			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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Abstract

Title: Cooperation and Integration: Keeping Austria's Forces Relevant for 21st Century

Report Date: March 2013

Page Count: 40

Word Count: 8120

Key Terms: Neutrality, EU, NATO, Comprehensive Approach, National Sovereignty

Classification: Unclassified

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Cooperation and Integration: Keeping Austria's Forces Relevant for 21st Century

The world expects you to work with each other for the common good.
Nobody can do everything. But each of us, if we are united, in our own
way, can do something.

— Secretary-General Ban-ki Moon¹

In a globalized security environment, change is taking place at a high tempo. The armies of the 21st century face growing uncertainty as well as rising change, insecurity and density in their strategic environment and predicting the future will be difficult. The struggle of today is the wish to know what will be different and what must be done to master the uncertainty. This is crucial, not only in an environment of external threats, but also when facing strong internal challenges and the pressure of an economic and financial crisis linked with inadequate resources. This can be best expressed as a situation of trying times, to which the Austrian Armed Forces are currently exposed.

After Austria regained its sovereignty in 1955, it developed a foreign policy based upon what long-term Foreign Minister and later Prime Minister Bruno Kreisky described as an “active neutrality policy”.² This policy offered Austria a limited framework to engage in international crisis management during the Cold War. The restrictions on Austria's State Treaty and the rigid block system did not allow a broad development of its foreign and security policy. With the collapse of the bi-polar system, Austria seized the opportunity and its foreign policy became primarily focused on European integration while holding on to a flexible interpretation of its neutrality.

The fast changing 21st century security environment with its dynamic risks is challenging Austria's traditional reliance upon an “active neutrality policy”. With the end of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, and accession of former members into NATO and the EU, Austria's status as a permanently neutral country has lost its geopolitical function and

value. Neutral status and traditionally low defense spending confine Austria's freedom of action concerning defense policy and strategic options and weaken its credibility as a reliable partner.³ This is still reflected in Austria's latest Security Strategy document, where neutrality is the driver for security and defense issues.⁴ In fact however, Austria will most definitely have to re-evaluate and re-define its role in this highly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment while transforming from a primarily 20th century security receiver during the Cold War to an actively engaged 21st century security provider.

Austria's integration in security structures which enable it to act in solidarity with other EU members is very much focused on the EU Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). Indeed, emerging security threats cannot be restricted to a particular country or region, or by a neutral stance.⁵ Therefore, Austria's foreign and security policy should recognize the need to lift reservations upon acting in security and defense matters with whomever, and wherever necessary, in order to promote peace, stability, and human rights, and to act in support of free access to the global commons in service of its survival and vital interests. Neutrality as a security concept is archaic for today's risks and hinders Austria in fully integrating into global security frameworks based upon shared responsibilities and mutual benefits. Staying outside a defense alliance or a future EU core defense group puts an overall security responsibility on Austria which it will not be able to bear in the future on the basis of available resources, tasks and capabilities. Austria will confront new risks, risks that cannot be managed by a small state in isolation.

The new Austrian Security Strategy of 2011 reflects a good understanding of the security environment. However it does not give a clear answer to what the role (new or changed) for the Austrian Armed Forces in the 21st century should be. An inward-centric focus on subsidiary security tasks, combined with a traditional understanding of the use of military forces for territorial defense, limits the action radius and its justification and leaves open the question of how to use and integrate the military forces into the global security architecture. As a consequence and amplified by an ongoing financial crisis, the armed forces face a fading justification and diminishing resources. They are forced to continue to operate with a 20th century focused capability portfolio of static territorial defense.

The current disparity between national security policy, vaguely defined security interests and military strategy does not allow aligning ways, means, and ends due to the lack of a concise long term outlook. The reluctance to use the armed forces in the context of their core military tasks sparks the tendency to foster the justification of the armed forces through extended use in domestic affairs like disaster relief, border control or assistance of police forces in providing security. The wide span of military and subsidiary tasks and the lack of resources increase risk and jeopardize the armed force's urgent need to change and transform for the 21st century. Subsidiary tasks in support of the population and the civilian authorities will always be a vital responsibility for the armed forces; however it should be balanced with core military responsibilities. Subsidiary tasks will have an influence in the overall strategy but should not be the driving force for system change while deflecting from the challenges of future risks.

In view of global transformations and the increasing diversity of risks, Austria is required to define defense anew. Austria's security responsibilities do not end at the geographical border. Austria is a full member of the EU and therefore shares European and global responsibilities. In the long-term Austria will not be able to maintain relevant and affordable armed forces without embracing far-reaching international security and defense cooperation. The challenge for Austria is to develop a new strategy for the armed forces which reflects the 21st century security environment, and provides security and resilience on the basis of an inclusive, multinational and comprehensive approach. Austria has to manage the challenge to match its political will for a desired level of ambition with the means to accomplish that ambition. More precisely, Austria must define, create, and sustain what it considers to be its required military capability. Finally, Austria has to face the reality that given its relatively small comparative power, it must rely on strong cooperation and inclusion in defense structures to secure its survival and vital interests.

Growing Instability in a Dynamic Security Environment

An interlocking security framework has fostered security, economic growth and freedom for the past six decades and worked well for Austria's integration in Europe. However, the current security environment contains numerous challenges. The threats of today and of the future demand a diversity of responses, which go far beyond the sole use of military power and certainly beyond the capacity of a single nation-state. Today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment compels a priority shift in the use of military power. The transformation of the security environment calls for a more comprehensive approach and the application of smart power. Military power will play a vital but smaller part in responding to new threats. The test for Austria's military

will be its ability to envision the future and to change policy and strategy in ways which are responsive to the changing security environment of a global information age by focusing on old and new alliances, cooperation with governments and institutions in a networked environment.⁶

The current security constellation poses more threats and is far more unpredictable than that which existed during the cold war period. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, organized crime and failing states continue to threaten security. Cyber attacks, employed on a large scale as a political or economic weapon, have also become a more serious concern. And there is still the old phenomenon of piracy, which disrupts humanitarian efforts and seriously affects world trade. These threats have become more complex and interconnected in recent years, largely as a result of globalization.⁷ Due to smart and adaptive adversaries, future conflicts will contain features that are hard to control and will drive military forces to respond in more creative ways. Smart adversaries will oppose us with hybrid threats, which combine conventional, irregular and high-end asymmetric challenges simultaneously in the same time and space.⁸ Since the 9/11 attacks, asymmetric warfare has become a dictum describing the change of character in war with the above mentioned underlying threats, where non state actors become a more prominent focus in armed conflicts.⁹

Various policies of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and NATO's recently established Emerging Security Challenges Division have moved attention to the new or emerging security challenges. Future challenges for national security and defense policy and the development of adequate military capabilities will unquestionably

be determined by a constantly changing security environment and rapidly evolving technologies. These security challenges will be further manifested through the phenomenon of globalization, which will connect various societies, like-minded groups and interests, and accelerates the proliferation of advanced technologies, WMD, international terrorism, and organized crime. Globalization has made the threats more complex and interconnected, while, at the same time it blurs geographical boundaries. The consequences of demographic developments like mass migration or rapid urbanization of coastal areas, energy demand, resource and regional food and water shortages, as well as environmental disasters and climate change, must be taken into consideration when talking about new challenges and risks. Technological developments will have a tremendous influence on future military capabilities and foster many advantages, but they will also hold numerous risks. The dependency of modern societies and security organizations on high-end technology goes hand in hand with increased vulnerability to cyber attacks from various state or non-state actors. It should be highlighted that new transnational threats are interacting in ever more diverse ways.

The European Security Strategy (ESS) develops a wide understanding of security and identifies the more conventional security threats as mentioned above.¹⁰ However, non-traditional or so called new emerging security challenges such as energy security, climate change and pandemics are further elaborated upon in the EU's report on the implementation of the ESS.¹¹ The EU's approaches to international security reflect the dynamism of the security environment and links security with these less traditional but diffuse and cross-cutting risks which threaten the survival, livelihood and dignity of people and go hand in hand with the UN approach of promoting human

security.¹² This underlines the EU's strategic direction as a potential global security actor guided by a comprehensive approach to security as expressed in the ESS. The EU's focus on an inclusive human approach to international security will have significant influence on member states security and defense policy.

The major challenge of a dynamic, multi-layered and cross-cutting security environment is no longer to win the kinetic phase of an armed conflict. Recent examples such as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan show that with the use of vast military power battles can be won quickly. But does this automatically lead to the desired effect of lasting peace, where the former enemy turns into a peaceful partner?¹³ Modern nation-states and coalitions will also need to possess adequate capabilities to win battles in the future. However, to gain victory based upon a sustainable peace will require a protracted and multidimensional struggle. The complexity of asymmetric or hybrid wars can no longer be resolved through purely military means.

While official war declarations lost their purpose a long time ago, the beginnings and endings of armed conflicts have generally been clearly marked. However, it may be expected that future conflicts will become blurred with no clear beginning or end, or even an unambiguous understanding of who is the actual opponent.¹⁴ In the future there may be no clear difference between peacetime and wartime as they become increasingly convergent and hard to distinguish in the context of a constant struggle - "Peace is now nothing else but institutionalized global struggle and warfare".¹⁵ Such a situation calls attention to the limits of pure hard power politics. Based on the nature of current and future conflicts, a self sustaining peace will only be reached through the balanced use of soft and hard power assets involving activities across the whole

spectrum of diplomatic, economic and military elements. Civil-military-cooperation, stabilization and reconstruction, nation or state-building and security sector reform have become the buzzwords for defense and capability planning. This increases the need for the further refinement of a comprehensive approach, where the EU must be more than just a military power and likewise more than only a civilian power. Moreover, for the implementation of its security policy, the EU has to develop a range of more diverse security partnerships. In particular, the EU and its members have to find a way to better synchronize efforts towards a real EU-NATO strategic partnership, overcoming the problematic positions of the EU non-NATO members (Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden, Cyprus and Malta) and in coherence with an EU-U.S. partnership. This is of particular importance due to the U.S.'s new alignment towards the Pacific region.

Changing World Order

Contemporary world order is marked by growing fragmentation and complexity. The global power shift has been accelerated during the last decade, especially in light of the enduring financial and economic crisis, lack of leadership and the above described instability. The Center for Strategic Security Studies argues that power and geopolitics are rising in importance and are far more complex than in the past.¹⁶ The challenges will include the uncertainty of China's new role as a global player and as a continuously growing economic and military power. So far, Beijing has not moved to directly challenge the existing system. Whether authoritarian China will respect the rule of law as well as democratic values remains unknown. Economic interdependence with the US and Europe may provide sufficient incentive for China to work within the established western-shaped economic system. However, scenarios point in two contrasting directions. A strong global order could direct China's growing strength in a constructive

way for the benefit of all, or in a worst case scenario, increasing Chinese assertiveness could undermine stability.¹⁷ In any case, the signs of sharpened geopolitical rivalry between U.S. and China are evident.

Independent from the development of the Sino-American relationship, it may be anticipated that power and geopolitics will increase at the expense of the existing multilateral and the legal order.¹⁸ There are three possible risk patterns that have the potential to spark an interstate conflict: the changing calculations of emerging players like China, India and Russia; increasing competition over resources; and risk of ongoing proliferation combined with growing concern about nuclear security and the fear that in the future wars in South Asia and the Middle East might include a nuclear dimension. Concerning regional instability, the Middle East and East and South Asia are the regions with the greatest potential to trigger instability and conflict of having a spillover effect on global security.¹⁹

At the same time, Europe's growing fragility, political and economic division, and questions about future cohesion weaken the EU's capacity to serve as an anchor of stability. With soaring debts and declining soft power, projecting stability beyond its periphery is getting harder for the EU as enlargements stall and incentives for neighbors to reform remain modest. As a consequence, the ability of the EU to perform as a player in the security and defense arena, despite the commitments of the Lisbon Treaty, will diminish. There is some concern that an inward-focused and less capable Europe would not be able to provide adequate forces to stabilize a crisis or conflict in bordering regions. The new emphasis in U.S. policy on the Asia-Pacific region increases the pressure for more pooling and resource sharing in the EU and NATO if Europe wants to

preserve its security and credibility. If it wants to remain a global actor, Europe will have to look quite different from what we see today. Besides undertaking structural reforms and introducing new policy instruments to overcome the crisis, Europe will need to boost its integration, which would imply a transfer of sovereignty in many policy areas including security and defense. Due to missed opportunities to open political discourse on the subject in the past, and growing popular feelings against the EU, enhancing integration, potentially at the expense of national autonomy, will require a firm political will. Europe can only perform its multilateral role on the world stage through a strong and united foreign, security, and defense policy.

Europe's Internal Security Policy Challenges

The ongoing changes in the security environment have resulted in most European countries (including Austria) reviewing their security and defense policy. The outcome of this process confirms that the security of nation-states and their vital and important interests are best served through a political alliance or union rather than stand-alone approaches. However, this logic is often contradicted by political reality.

Facing complex security problems, both NATO and the EU have called upon their members to harmonize their disjointed national security initiatives. Diverging perceptions of risks and threats, and different approaches to national security policy and strategy, will remain a challenge for the EU security framework. Sovereignty is still a critical issue when it comes to soliciting contribution to new collective capability projects. However given the pressure of security needs, as well as economic and financial austerity, it is clear that unless nation-states act collectively, a lack of means to address emerging security challenges will become an even bigger problem.²⁰ The EU's demographic evolution towards an aging society and its economic implications,

combined with a fading justification for armed forces, mean that in the medium-term pressure to further reduce defense expenditure in favor of other budget areas will increase. The first impacts of these drastic reductions of military capabilities are already visible, and European countries and the EU as a whole are in danger of losing their capacity to act militarily in an effective manner. The reaction to the economic and financial crises follows the usual pattern of uncoordinated reduction of national military capabilities without alignment of ways, ends and means and without consulting EU members and external partners and stakeholders such as the U.S., NATO or the United Nations.²¹

The Libya Operation clearly demonstrated the negative impact of the financial crisis on European armies' capabilities to project military power beyond its geographic area. The disastrous capability gap is now being widened due to the effects of the financial crisis. Several EU members were not able to take part in the operation because they did not have the equipment or financial resources.²² Furthermore, the Libya operation clearly showed that successful military actions would not have been possible without U.S. support.²³

Christian Moelling, researcher at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, draws a risk scenario of a Europe without defense in three distinctive waves due to an uncoordinated and unguided structural shift in the armed forces and defense industry.²⁴ The first wave will lead to the emergence of 27 incapable "bonsai armies" over the next five years due to the uncoordinated military capability reduction process in all EU member states induced by the economic and financial crisis. This will consequently lead to an expanding capability and modernization gap forcing some

smaller countries including Austria to postpone further development of the armed forces. This in turn could lead to reduced active participation and declining interest in forming a robust EU Common Security and Defense Policy, and an erosion of solidarity among EU members. The second wave will affect Europe's defense industry within the next five to ten years. Budget cuts will reduce the number and scope of military projects, and internal markets will decline and force the defense industry to look outside Europe. As a result Europe will face future concerns regarding the security of supplies with higher dependence on non-European partners and supplier countries as a side-effect. The third wave will be visible in ten to twenty years when the EU loses its technological leadership due to the fact that fewer technologies will be developed for defense applications.²⁵

Summing up, the EU, its member states and primary military institutions face a significant crisis due to weak strategic leadership, the absence of a clear and concise vision and a sound strategic plan, and an eroding commitment to cooperation and solidarity. European military forces, Austria included, are in a phase of drastic decline due to indecisive political leadership.

Austria's Security Dilemma

Austria's apparently favorable geopolitical situation, in the center of Europe surrounded by stable democracies, creates a comfortable situation without imminent threats. At the same time, this superficially safe environment makes it very hard at the political level to formulate an adequate security strategy and provide for its ways and means in order to meet the national, European and global demands of a dynamic, multi-polar, 21st century security environment. Since joining the EU in 1995, Austrian's neutrality has been much under debate, but is constantly used as an excuse to avoid

concrete security and defense commitments. Austria's political attitude towards defense obligations can be described as permanently neutral but at the same time alliance free. Although it is adapting its forces as best as possible in order to meet NATO standards, Austria is still not a member of the Alliance. As a member of the EU it is fully integrated in CSDP structures, but with certain caveats, and Vienna refuses to act militarily without an UN mandate. This is a security policy that is in effect condemned to neutrality due to the lack of political will to convince Austrian citizens to accept risk and commit to strategic partners and the international order—to create a sound and convincing security strategy that is actually capable of providing for security and defense.

Austria's new security strategy perpetuates this confusing concept when it comes to defense. It defines what can be best described as an approach to security that is dependent on the ability of other nations and security organizations to provide military support.²⁶ The Austrian security policy and its security strategy are based on the following guiding principles.²⁷

- The principle of a whole of government and whole of nation approach combining civil-military cooperation and recognition of the concurrence and interdependence of internal and external security;
- The principle of an active and preventive policy approach;
- The principle to act in solidarity within the EU but also with global responsibilities;
- The principle of human security;
- The principle of an active neutrality policy.

On the basis of these principles, Austrian security policy aims for a comprehensive and proactive strategy based on solidarity within the EU security framework. Hence, the Austrian security strategy combines all elements of national power for an active engagement at the national and international levels in order to preserve or create a favorable security environment and to mitigate threats and risks.²⁸ Furthermore, the new Austrian security strategy is based on the assumptions that a conventional attack on Austria is currently not likely; that emerging and complex risks can only be managed through enhanced international cooperation; and that the importance of international organizations will increase in relation to single nation-states. In addition, the security strategy restates Austria's commitment to full participation in the whole spectrum of CSDP operations (Petersberg Tasks) including EU Battle Groups²⁹, and active participation in discussion and planning to further develop CSDP under the Lisbon Treaty.³⁰ Beyond that, Austria will support the creation of a permanent structured cooperation for defense.³¹ The strategy also recognizes the need for pooling and sharing of capabilities as Austria, and many other nations, will not be able to provide for the whole spectrum of military capabilities in the future.

That being said, what are the limitations? There are multiple fault lines within the Austrian security strategy, and even though it recognizes the complex threats emerging from a changing environment, and stresses the importance of security cooperation, it does not provide convincing conclusions concerning the most critical questions: what are the tasks that need to be accomplished in order to further develop and integrate the armed forces into multilateral security structures? As a result the question of effective defense is still unresolved. The security strategy follows the mainstream of other CSDP

discussions. There is strong optimism that the changing security environment can be kept stable and favorable for Austria through engagement at the solidarity level. There is also the familiar hope that other EU and NATO members will continue to provide for Europe's security and defense. As a second order of effect the assumption is made that this will cover Austria's defense needs as well. Likewise, there is the assumption that active neutrality is an accepted and acceptable level of commitment towards other EU members. Proactive engagement is very much restricted by the constitutional law of neutrality and the use of the Irish Clause, which absolves Austria, as well as all other neutral non-NATO EU members, from the mutual assistance clause and from their obligation to provide "aid and assistance by all the means in their power if a member state is the victim of armed aggression against its territory".³² However, Austria stays committed by showing solidarity towards member states victimized by terrorist attack or suffering from a natural or man-made disaster.³³ The trouble is that Austria continuously leaves open the question of how to reduce the contradictions between solidarity and mutual or common defense on the one hand and neutrality on the other. Attempting to reach a defined end with two potentially contradictory ways is a highly questionable approach. By taking this approach, Austria runs the risk of losing its credibility as a reliable partner within the EU. By further degrading the army's capabilities, it runs the risk of not being able to provide for security and defense.

Austria's attitude towards neutrality and its protective approach to sovereignty run contrary to its national security and defense needs. It is in sharp contrast to the conclusions that global challenges can only be addressed through close cooperation with international organizations and allies. It is also contradicted by Austria's limited

financial means and economic capability to provide for its own security and defense.

Austria, of course, is not the only country to be plagued by these dilemmas among EU member-states. Nonetheless, its excessive attachment to sovereignty could prevent the achievement of a truly common European security policy.³⁴ Due to the current economic and fiscal crisis Austria and other neutral non-NATO EU members are reluctant to change. If the bigger EU nations' frustration over the EU's tepid commitment to CSDP continues to increase, there will be little hope of seeing dramatic movement towards an effective common defense. The EU's indecision over how to respond in solidarity to the Libyan crisis, and the EU External Action Service's failure to formulate a coherent strategy, were trying and revealing experiences. In the end the operation was executed under the NATO framework by an alliance of the willing, with heavy support from the U.S.³⁵

It should be realized that EU CSDP in its current form only provides for crisis management operations outside the EU within its sphere of interest, with the endeavor to promote conflict prevention and peace and stability in order to foster regional development through civil-military cooperation in line with the UN Charter and human security. When creating CSDP, the EU's identified priority was to build security in the EU's neighborhood as well as support for an international order based on multilateralism. In addition to the lack of adequate military capability, the current mutual assistance clause and the solidarity clause do not provide for a commitment to collective defense. CSDP was created for a different purpose and as a compromise to provide for a wide range of actors' priorities. There are some members who would like to see CSDP develop towards mutual defense commitment, some who would like to see

their traditional neutral status protected (including Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden), and others who seek to ensure that CSDP will not deteriorate NATO's collective defense.³⁶ Moreover, it confirms NATO as the basis for the collective defense of its members.

In the context of the Lisbon Treaty, CSDP means that better conditions have been created for the EU to function as a global player with a framework connecting diplomacy, foreign aid, development, and defense under a crisis management strategy. However, it is still far from being a common defense organization. This can also be illustrated by the report prepared for the President of France on the consequences of France's reintegration into NATO's command and force structure.³⁷ It clearly states that the term "Europe of Defense" must be properly used as it does not mean the defense of Europe from military threats, since only NATO with the U.S. would be capable of conducting such defense should Europe ever have the misfortune to be attacked. The current combination of European defense capabilities and CSDP alone would not be able to defend Europe's territory in the foreseeable future. The report further states that this is not the purpose for which the CSDP project was designed. Currently, CSDP can only be used for the EU's external military or civil military crisis management actions and for cooperation in the defense industry through the European Defense Agency (EDA). Any other understanding of the scope and capacity of CSDP will only raise unrealistic hopes and disappointment. In short, the mutual defense and solidarity clauses in the Lisbon Treaty do not generate a collective defense commitment comparable to NATO's Article 5, which is still the driver concerning mutual defense. The EU will only have limited military power to perform as a security organization as long as

EU members do not admit to the concept of “pooled sovereignty” nationally as well as at the EU level as a whole.³⁸

As for NATO, Austria has been fully participating in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program since 1995 and restated its commitment to participate in non-Article 5 operations if they are determined to be in Austria’s security interests.³⁹ The Partnership itself was designed to serve as both a framework for post-Cold War security cooperation and also as a pathway towards NATO integration and membership.⁴⁰ Austria’s bilateral partnership program is centered on international peace support operations and crisis management, training and education, the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP) and the Operational Capability Concept (OCC) to gain interoperability according to NATO standard. Interoperability is seen as a critical condition for participation in any EU CSDP program or future defense structure.⁴¹ The NATO security concept of 2010 reiterated that Article 5 is still considered as the bedrock of the Alliance, but recognized that the Article 5 threats are changing in nature and a classic territorial threat is unlikely to reemerge within the next decades.⁴² In the near to mid-term future, more reasonable direct threats are unconventional challenges from states as well as non-state actors including terrorism, organized crime, medium to long-range ballistic missiles along with the proliferation of nuclear material emerging out of the greater Middle East as well as threats through cyber space.⁴³ In the future, it can be expected that space will become an increasingly prominent domain for NATO.⁴⁴

NATO’s traditional culture as defense alliance is being challenged by the new focus on cyber and missile defense.⁴⁵ What NATO is lacking to a high degree is the capability to operate effectively with all elements of power to shape the environment of

globalized, crosscutting, and non-traditional challenges.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, NATO in comparison to the EU CSDP is still a far more capable military alliance due to U.S. support. However, looking solely at NATO Europe, its military power projection capabilities are highly constrained and overlap to a high degree with the EU CSDP's deficits as both organizations rely on the same pool of military assets.⁴⁷ If both organizations want to stay or become effective security providers for Europe in these trying times, they must look towards close cooperation to harmonize their security efforts.

The most important current limit upon enhanced defense integration is a lack of trust. France, the United Kingdom, and Germany are highly skeptical of large multilateral programs undertaken in the name of cost sharing. Nations fear being denied use of these programs during a political or military crisis as partners could veto their application due to political differences or conflicting strategic priorities.⁴⁸ Pooling and sharing can help to rationalize efforts and to reduce costs, but it is no panacea in view of drastically reduced defense spending. Understanding of what items and services can be subject to pooling and sharing and what must be kept at a purely national level varies widely between member states and is connected to the hesitation to surrender control when it comes to defense matters. Pooling and sharing projects challenge member states' desire for autonomy in three ways. First they raise fear of entrapment—to be put under pressure to join a mission because a pooling partner wants to take part. Secondly, they create fear of abandonment if a partner wants to use a capability but is not supported by the other(s). Finally, there is the fear of free-riding. Bigger nations express their concern that smaller nations reap the benefits of cooperation without

contributing much in return. These fears are grounded in a fear of the loss of sovereignty.⁴⁹ Above all, pooling and sharing must be based upon clear intentions to create high-profile joint forces. Pooling and sharing or any other future security and defense cross-border cooperation depends on the willingness of nations to accept political risk, which could include a partial loss of sovereignty. Sovereignty is the core issue that hinders deeper cooperation within EU and NATO.⁵⁰ Past doctrines were dominated by tanks and fast jets. Today's vocabulary is multinational cooperation, information dominance, cyber operations, non-kinetic effects, precision attack, counter IED, and counter-piracy and the yardstick is stability and development and not numbers of destroyed tanks and airplanes.

Austria's Need to Fully Integrate into Europe's Security and Defense Structures

The option defined within the Lisbon Treaty to further develop CSDP into an evolved system of collective defense (if so decided by the European Council concordantly) is still not more than an option. In the current EU political environment it is not likely to be acted upon in the foreseeable future. By way of contrast, with its new Alliance Strategic Concept of Active Engagement and Modern Defense (2010), NATO is adapting to the security environment and its new emerging security threats.⁵¹ NATO's redefined Article 5 offers a flexible defense approach against threat and risks of terror, organized crime, cyber threats and ballistic missiles. In addition NATO defines the provision of security through crisis management, cooperation, partnerships, and the open door policy as equally relevant tasks. Overall, as long as EU's CSDP cannot provide for mutual defense, NATO will continue to be the only security organization which can guarantee the defense of the EU and provide for robust military crisis management capabilities. The recently established intelligence unit and strategic

analysis capability have increased NATO's crisis prevention tools.⁵² Furthermore, NATO's standing command and force structures and its ties to non-EU countries provide vital situational awareness, information sharing, and command capabilities. NATO's transformation is fully in line with Austria's security and defense interests. These are interests which, particularly in the areas of mutual defense and high end crisis management operations, EU CSDP cannot guarantee.

As an aspect of rebalancing towards the Asia-Pacific region, the U.S. seeks to place more responsibility on the EU to care for its own security needs and interests. However, only enhanced cooperation and continued U.S. support will enable the EU to play its global security role over the coming decades, and it will be NATO that guarantees a continued transatlantic link.⁵³ Furthermore, limited resources force the European nations to focus on NATO if they want to keep the only functional EU defense system alive. With the ongoing EU pooling and sharing and NATO smart defense programs, EU nations have to prioritize and decide on how to spend their reduced budgets wisely. Given the current moves of bigger EU-NATO nations such as France and the United Kingdom away from CSDP and towards NATO, the EU has to face reality and rethink its ambition concerning mutual defense. It would be prudent to use NATO structures to develop key capabilities, which are of vital importance to Europeans, in cases of NATO, EU CSDP, and United Nations or ad-hoc operations. Because of the EU's recognized need for defense it can be predicted that the majority of EU nations will move towards NATO, as they will be unwilling and perhaps unable to devote the resources required to turn EU CSDP into a mutual defense structure parallel to the Alliance. In the face of smaller defense budgets, it will be in the interest of all EU

countries if both organizations cooperate more closely in all aspects of the capability development process.⁵⁴ NATO should remain as the collective security organization while the EU's focus should concentrate exclusively on crisis management, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.⁵⁵ The new security challenges call for diverse security answers, including the co-existence of two differently focused security structures, namely the EU CSDP and NATO, which complement each other and coordinate efforts. Limited resources will force nations to invest their core military capabilities in NATO, which already ensures Europe's defense today. This will not automatically negate CSDP, but it will limit it to crisis management responsibilities for which it was originally founded.

Even though NATO's focus is no longer exclusively placed on collective defense, and its strategy has moved much closer to Austria's security interests, NATO membership for Austria is still not a political option and it is not addressed in the new security strategy. On the other hand, EU CSDP is far away from providing for mutual defense. If Austria wants to take its defined security interest of mutual defense, solidarity with EU members, and the continuing role of its armed forces as an instrument of national power seriously, it will have to rethink its political aversion of full military integration into European security structures, NATO included.

Suggested Recommendations for the Austrian Army

As previously outlined, transnational security threats, declining defense budgets in combination with an increasingly complex and comprehensive crisis management, demands enhanced defense cooperation. Sharing and pooling of capabilities, as well as role and task sharing amongst the EU nations and EU partners, is the way to go and

does not allow prioritizing individual wishes. This can only be successful if every single EU country contributes its share.

Austria's commitment to economic, fiscal and political integration into the EU over the last two decades must now be extended to embrace enhanced defense cooperation as a logical next step. With its limited spectrum of defense capabilities, Austria will only be able to shape its security interests if it fully participates. Acting on its own will increase Austria's irrelevance in security and defense policy. The diverse security and defense interests among the EU members make it more likely that further development of the defense cooperation will be driven by a core group of EU members and through regional cooperation with strong focus on and commitment to NATO's defense capabilities. Opting out from a future EU permanent structured defense cooperation will not only weaken Austria's position within the EU but also lead to the loss of influence on regional security issues, where Austria's greatest interests lies.

The recent trend for Austria has been regional defense cooperation primarily with Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia, which all have professional armies and are strong proponents of NATO.⁵⁶ It can be expected that all EU members, and especially potential defense partners, will closely monitor Austria's next steps in developing its security strategy and armed forces, especially after Austria voted in January 2013 to retain its conscription system. It is remarkable that the domestic political debate about conscription was only partly about military or security concerns. The political argument circled around topics as diverse as how changing the conscript system and the loss of the civil service (the alternative form of national service chosen by those who opt not to serve in the military) would affect community service,

civil rescue and disaster relief, healthcare, and elderly care institutions, as well as Austria's neutrality.⁵⁷ If these are the priorities, defense will continue to be crafted to serve the interests of specific domestic interest groups.⁵⁸ There will be no basis for determining the European and geopolitical value of Austria's neutrality apart from the presumption that it is a comfortable position without obligation in a financially austere situation.⁵⁹ Indeed it can be anticipated that neither the conscript system nor the commitment to neutrality will be of any real importance for Austrian security within the next two decades.⁶⁰ Austria's largely ignored foreign and security policy with its lack of a long-term goal, as well as the biased understanding of neutrality, has reinforced isolationist sentiment. This leaves a vital questions unanswered: what are the main military tasks that the Austrian Armed Forces must be prepared to fulfill in the 21st century within the European security framework?

It will require a combination of clear vision and a clearly defined central security and defense objective to promote proactive policies designed to maximize Austria's limited resources. If Austria wants to see the EU to evolve further towards mutual defense as one of its declared interest, it must actively push this issue forward.⁶¹ To do so, it needs a concise and comprehensive security strategy determining ends, ways, and means, which must be communicated both towards its domestic electorate and its European partners, upholstered with a strong political determination to initiate change and to avoid risks of isolationism. The comprehensive security strategy must unambiguously specify what national security and defense tasks still have to be carried out under national autonomy, and what tasks can only be effectively addressed within a cooperation framework. NATO, as the only functioning European and Euro-Atlantic

defense organization, must become a valid option in Austria's security approach.

Austria must actively advocate a stronger EU CSDP and NATO cooperation in all fields of defense management and acquisition, defense research and technology, and operational cooperation. By doing so it must overcome its ambivalent attitude towards NATO.

In addition, at national level Austria must clarify its desired level of ambition and military contributions for global security engagements within the EU, NATO and other international organizations, as part of its obligation to provide for human security and the responsibility to protect.⁶² All options must be guided by and lead towards a comprehensive and interagency (whole of government) approach. A country that wants to play a vital role in the EU cannot limit its security contribution to the civil dimension only. Austria must develop a clear security profile and a precise military level of ambition in order to become a dependable partner. A consistent strategic profile is preferable to an occasion-based policy. The extent of contributions and intensity of cooperation with partners depends very much on the declared political and military risk Austria is willing to undertake. Currently, this difficult question of "what is the risk threshold that allows Austria to stay committed militarily in a protracted operation" is continuously avoided at political level as it cannot be linked backward to clearly-specified vital, important or marginal interests. This must also include a sophisticated debate on the relevance of the use of force as an element of security, as high-intensity military operations or robust interventions are well within the scope of the Petersberg tasks. Austria must address this issue if the move from peace-keeping to peace-making or peace-enforcement operations is defined as being within its politically accepted range. Solidarity within the

EU, as mentioned in the Austrian security strategy, cannot be affected in isolation. It must be based upon established, credible, and reliable military contributions.

In order to alleviate the risk attached to reduced military capabilities and the strong reliance on partners resulting from the loss of defense autonomy, Austria needs to invest in strategic early warning as well as in common EU forecasting capabilities to react timely on any changes to the security environment.

Austria needs to accelerate its military transformation to realize greater operational capabilities based on a sound and resourced security strategy. With declining defense spending Austria's best course is to dedicate itself, together with its partners, to judicious low cost initiatives that enhance the application of scarce resources. It must be clear that cooperative pooling and sharing initiatives will never compensate for insufficient defense spending. Nevertheless, properly managed, pooling and sharing, and in particular structural pooling, can create significant savings for reinvestment.⁶³ Therefore, the main effort must be towards a balanced allocation of the defense budget between personnel, investment and operational costs. The goal for the investment level should be 20 to 25 percent of the total budget.⁶⁴

Based on multinational cooperation and the EU Battle Group Concept as the transformation platform, Austria should invest in deployable and sustainable forces. The aim should be the creation of capable expeditionary units to operate under a robust UN Chapter VII mandate including forceful scenarios, and improved stabilization and reconstruction assets well above the current peace-keeping capacity. The long term view must be focused on capabilities and structures that can be integrated into future EU or NATO defense structures. Cost offsets could be generated through gradual

reduction of capabilities and structures designed only and specifically for territorial defense. The advantages of the Battle Group model are its support of a regional approach, constant training at combined and joint level, and the focus on interoperability. Above all, this could set the conditions for genuine common doctrine and training procedures, and not least a changed mind set including the trust necessary for deeper specialization, pooled capabilities, and shared opportunities among EU nations.

Furthermore, the focus should be on the development of networked forces, a key to reach interoperability. Reliable networks play a critical role for force integration, situational awareness, mission accomplishment and force protection.

Austria could also push the pooling of limited national air transport assets and the integration of its systems, inclusive transport helicopters, into the European Air Transport Fleet (EATF) or under NATO pooling arrangements. These pooling initiatives could be enlarged towards land transport and other logistic systems with shared training, maintenance and life-cycle management.

Furthermore, Austria should push towards a common European military airspace control and policing capability. This should go hand in hand with the civilian development of a Single European Sky (SES) air traffic management to ensure a faultless military integration in the future civilian air traffic network.⁶⁵

Austria could actively lobby within the EU and NATO for a common funding of operations as an incentive for those nations which contribute a higher percentage of deployed forces. Member states with a high force contribution to a mission would then

contribute less to the common costs.⁶⁶ This would be an incentive for shared capabilities (transport, logistic and command and control) and specialization and niche capabilities.

The aim here is not produce an exhaustive list of cooperation possibilities—the real goal is to outline possible ways to address Austria’s security needs. The key aspect is enhanced integration into Europe’s security organizations and defense structures in order to maximize security output. The Austrian Armed Forces in the 21st century should be able to integrate into EU CSDP and NATO structures to contribute to defend Europe’s common strategic interests. In order to do so, they have to be expeditionary, sustainable, and capable of working closely with civilian crisis management actors. Archiving these ambitions will not necessarily require considerably greater resources. It will certainly require a strong political will in support of enhanced cooperation, up to and including the sacrifice of certain aspects of a traditional understanding of national sovereignty and defense.

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